

recent information inspired by the randomized carotid trials. The renal aortic ratio, a commonly used North American criterion for renal artery stenosis, is dismissed as inaccurate as a sole criterion of stenosis. I was perplexed with the extensive space devoted to the discussion of the continuous wave and pulsed Doppler scan cerebrovascular examination, which is essentially of historical interest to most readers. A final problem is that it is sometimes difficult to locate tables or figures that are pages away from the text reference, a consequence of the large volumes of information presented.

The few faults in this text, however, are far outweighed by its value. I know that we will refer to it as a resource when we prepare for accreditation next time because it has such a comprehensive review of the literature in every area. Indeed, even the discussion of principles and examination techniques may be of great help for the beginner or when starting a new laboratory. I know of no current text that offers such an exhaustive review of vascular diagnosis, and I recommend it to any physician in training or practice who has an interest or practice involvement in the noninvasive vascular laboratory.

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Vascular and endovascular surgery

Jonathan Beard, Peter Gaines; Philadelphia; 1998;
W. B. Saunders; 512 pages; \$90.00.

Vascular and endovascular surgery is part of the series *A companion to specialist surgical practice*, which is designed to provide up-to-date information for surgeons in training and busy practitioners on the various surgical subspecialties. There are six other volumes in the series that cover the topics of emergency/critical care, upper gastrointestinal surgery, hepatobiliary/pancreatic surgery, colorectal surgery, breast/endocrine surgery, and transplantation. The individual volumes have been published within 12 months of the project's inception, and each volume will be updated and published as a new edition at frequent intervals to ensure that they remain up to date. The entire series is edited and authored by physicians from the United Kingdom; this may explain the premise that the subspecialties of general surgery (eg, vascular surgery) are practiced by general surgeons (and not vascular surgeons) in all but a few large tertiary referral centers. This arrangement is clearly not the case in the United States, where specialists in vascular surgery are available in most cities.

As its title would suggest, the book concentrates on both standard vascular surgery and endovascular procedures. Each topic includes basic information on the etiology and natural history of disease and on the available treatment options. Appropriately, endovascular approaches are discussed within each chapter as part of a continuum of therapeutic alternatives. The chapter covering acute arterial ischemia, authored by the book's editors, provides

useful algorithms for evaluation and treatment via both surgical and interventional means. There is thoughtful coverage of extracranial carotid artery disease, including patient evaluation, differences in determination of stenosis measurement, and surgical endarterectomy trials. The chapters on deep venous thrombosis and vasospastic disorders/vasculitis are especially well written; the latter contains algorithms and charts that are easy to follow and provide valuable information for the practitioner. Indeed, the basic considerations and surgical treatment options are discussed nicely for each disease entity.

For a text that includes "endovascular" in its title, I was a bit disappointed to find precious little information on the technical aspects of endovascular procedures or, for that matter, on the current results of various endovascular interventions. The busy practicing surgeon needs to have up-to-date data on these procedures to counsel patients appropriately. Specifically, a comparison of the short-term and long-term outcomes of surgical versus endovascular procedures for aortoiliac and infrainguinal occlusive disease, renal artery stenosis, carotid artery stenosis, and abdominal aortic aneurysm (on the basis of the most current peer-reviewed literature) would be extremely helpful and would allow readers to have this information at their fingertips, rather than having to obtain the information with an exhaustive literature search. This is information that we could all use, especially given the increasing desire of patients for minimally invasive solutions to their surgical problems.

To be fair, this volume does not claim to be a comprehensive textbook of vascular and endovascular surgery. The reader is referred to several other texts for further specific information in the field. As such, it largely does achieve its goal of giving the surgical trainee and the practicing general surgeon a basic fund of knowledge on a wide range of topics in peripheral vascular disease. I would recommend it highly to either. It probably does not, however, have the more specific information required by a practicing vascular surgeon, nor does it cover the technical specifics essential to performing endovascular procedures. The addition of some basic data and technical specifics would likely enhance the value of this already substantial text.

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Common surgical diseases: an algorithmic approach to problem solving

Keith Millikan, Theodore Saclarides; New York City;
1998; Springer Verlag; 512 pages; \$34.95.

Common surgical diseases: an algorithmic approach to problem solving provides a general overview of many issues confronting the surgeon. The book reviews all of the

major areas of surgery, including preoperative evaluation, trauma, vascular disease, endocrine disease, abdominal pathology, pediatric surgery, urology, orthopedic surgery, thoracic surgery, skin pathology, head and neck disease, breast problems, and surgical emergencies. Each chapter addresses a specific issue and provides a brief discussion of the pathology and etiology, clinical presentation, diagnostic tests, appropriate management, expectations from treatment, and any special considerations. The chapters conclude with an algorithm for evaluation and treatment.

The book clearly and succinctly provides fundamental information regarding a wide array of issues. It is an excellent resource for the initial management of a problem, and it provides a framework for further evaluation and treatment. The organization is logical, and the information is easy to find. It covers a wide spectrum of issues in a book that is straightforward and portable. It is also easy to read and is especially useful for problems that the reader may encounter infrequently.

Each chapter is brief, usually less than five pages, and concise. General concepts are provided, and a standard approach to treatment is given. However, the book does not provide an in-depth discussion of issues and usually does not provide the basis for the conclusions or recommendations. I found that some of the chapters, especially those with which I had some familiarity, were too general and provided little new information.

Furthermore, no attempt is made to be exhaustive or to provide a detailed discussion of the controversies or of the alternative forms of management. References are generally not provided, and the studies supporting the recommendations are not discussed. In addition, although the

algorithms do provide appropriate direction for treatment, they do not provide specific information regarding such issues as medication dosages, duration of therapy, or contingencies for unexpected outcomes. However, because of the conciseness of the text, this would be impossible and was not, I believe, the intention of the editors. Given the multiplicity of the authors, however, the chapters show a remarkable consistency in both organization and content.

This book will be most useful for medical students and residents as a quick and immediately available reference. Experienced surgeons will find it useful for reviewing issues with which they have limited familiarity or for preparing for recertification or board examinations. It also will be useful for nonsurgeons seeking a basic understanding of surgical problems or desiring to know the likely evaluation and treatment of patients who are referred for surgical consultation. It does not, however, supplant standard surgical texts, which, by the virtue of their size and more narrow focus, offer far more definitive and detailed information.

Overall, I recommend this text as a useful resource for those seeking either general or quick information on a wide variety of topics. It will be especially useful to those who do not have the time or the easy access to more detailed sources of information. It is inexpensive compared with most surgical texts, and there are few currently available books that provide similar information.

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MESSAGE FROM THE EDITORS

The following people acted as reviewers for the Journal of Vascular Surgery between October 1, 1997, and September 30, 1998. Their names were inadvertently left off the acknowledgment list that was published in the January issue of the Journal. The editors apologize for this oversight.

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